

*Pamela Perry
80 Charter Oak Ave Apt 203
Hartford CT*

Appropriations Committee - Public Hearing
February 16, 2017

RE: DSS Medicaid/Community First Choice home care funding

Dear Appropriations Committee,

My name is Pamela Perry and I am a home care consumer on the D.S.S. Medicaid waiver program. I receive a budget through Community First Choice so I can purchase services so I can continue to live at home. I am happy to see that in the Governor's budget, funding levels are not cut for this vital program I rely on. I am here tonight to ask you to please protect funding for our DSS Medicaid waiver services -- and I urge you to increase this funding to make home care services stronger and safer.

Under the D.S.S. Medicaid waiver program, I receive a budget so I can hire a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) to help me live at home. My PCA, Diane, cooks for me, makes sure I eats properly, cleans my house for me and washes my clothes. She brings me to my doctor's appointments and the grocery store.

I go to dialysis 3 days per week. On my dialysis days, I am drained. I don't think I could make it without her; she goes above and beyond the call of duty. Sometimes when I feel like I can't go on, she's right there to pick me back up and encourage me to keep going.

I love everything about the program except for the fact that the Medicaid budgets we are given do not pay our PCAs enough to live on. My PCA is only paid \$13.53 an hour. And because DSS does not provide workers' comp insurance, Diane cannot work in my home for more than 25.75 hours per week. If I could afford to pay out of my pocket I would do it in a heartbeat, but I am dependant on this D.S.S. Medicaid program.

I want to keep Diane around for a long time, but I worry that she can't support herself given these conditions and she might have to leave for a better-paying job. I haven't been able to find anyone I trust as much as Diane.

It was physically difficult for me to get here tonight, but Diane and my home care services are so important to me. I hope you will maintain funding for the D.S.S. Medicaid waiver program in the Governor's budget. I urge you to do even better and fund additional Medicaid dollars we need to make the home care program stronger and safer for people like me. It would be like a new lease on life for me. Thank you.